



Plant Fact Sheet

Narrowleaf Penstemon

Penstemon angustifolius Nutt. ex. Pursh

Plant symbol = PEAN4

Contributed by:

USDA-NRCS New Mexico Plant Materials Center
and

New Mexico State University Los Lunas Agricultural Science Center

Alternate Names

Broadbeard Penstemon

Taperleaf Penstemon

Broadbeard Beardtongue

Uses

Erosion control: Narrow leaf penstemon is a drought tolerant forb. It is helpful in preventing wind erosion on sandy dunes, plains and grasslands where it establishes.

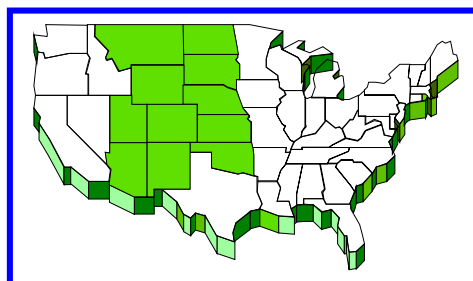
Wildlife: Narrow leaf penstemon provides a food source to small birds and mammals. It is heavily used by hummingbirds and various insects during flowering.

Urban: Narrow leaf penstemon is a drought tolerant forb that also produces beautiful flowers in early spring. This makes it an ideal plant for xeriscaping.



Description

Penstemon angustifolius Nutt. ex. Pursh., narrow leaf penstemon, is native to various western and plains states. It is a stout, smooth, waxy, gray green perennial herb. The plant grows from 8 to 24 inches with several stout, erect or somewhat curving stems. The flowers range from 1/2 to 3/4 inch and are various shades of violet and pink. Insect guidelines may or may not be present.



Adaptation

Narrow leaf penstemon is found throughout the western and great plains states. It is adapted to sandy mesas and grasslands and is frequently

found on dunes. It does poorly and is short lived when planted in heavy soils.

Establishment

The seed of narrow leaf penstemon requires cold stratification for germination. Approximately 85% of the seed are dormant. Total germination averages above 90%. Field plantings of this seed should be done in the fall. Seeding should be at approximately 12 seed per foot. With adequate winter moisture or supplemental irrigation, stands are generally good.

Management

After stand establishment, it is important to limit irrigation. In normal years with 8-10 inches of precipitation, no irrigation is necessary. Narrow leaf penstemon is extremely sensitive to root rot fungi and if overwatered the entire stand will be destroyed.

Although not necessary, narrow leaf penstemon responds well to fertilization. After establishment, it does not appear to be damaged by the use of pre-emergent herbicides. After harvest the plants soon become dormant and may then be mowed.

Availability

Seed may be obtained through New Mexico Crop Improvement.

References

1. Heflin, Jean. 1997. Penstemons The Beautiful Beardtongues of New Mexico. Jackrabbit Press. Albuquerque, New Mexico.
2. Martin, W.C. and C.R. Hutchins. 1980. A Flora of New Mexico. J. Kramer. Vaduz, West Germany.
3. Kearny, T.H. and R.H. Peebles. 1942. Flowering Plants and Ferns of Arizona. U.S. Government Printing Office. Washington, D.C.

Prepared by: Dr. E. Ramona Garner, USDA-NRCS New Mexico Plant Materials, 1036 Miller Street, SW, Los Lunas, NM 87031 e-mail: llunas@nmsu.edu or GarnerR@aol.com

For more information about this and other conservation plants, contact your local NRCS field office or Conservation District.

Visit the Plant Materials Program at <http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov>

USDA prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs). Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326W, Whitten Bldg., 14th and Independence Ave, SW Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5694 (Voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity employer.

February 2000